CHAPTER-IV

The Emergence of 'Third Party'
CHAPTER IV

THE EMERGENCE OF 'THIRD PARTY'

The idea of Pakistan and a divided India was not so long ago viewed as chimerical and impracticable; it remained consigned to obscurity until Jinnah and his Muslim League put the seal of approval on it at the Lahore session of the All India Muslim League, which passed its famous Pakistan Resolution on 23 March 1940. The Resolution asserted that Muslim India would not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan was considered de novo, and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it was framed with their approval and consent. It laid down the basic principles of the constitutional plan of its choice by recommending that geographically contiguous units be demarcated into regions, with such territorial readjustment as might be considered necessary. It proposed that the areas where Muslims formed a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zone of India, be then grouped to constitute as independent state.

The Lahore Resolution thus envisaged that division of India into two parts, namely, a Muslim India called Pakistan and a Hindu India called Hindustan, the former consisting of two zones, the north-western zone including the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province,
Sind and Baluchistan, and the north-eastern zone comprising Bengal and Assam. The question of demarcating and defining the territories was to be taken up after the principle of division was accepted, but the existing boundaries of the proposed zones were not to be maimed or mutilated.

The Muslim League was thus forging ahead from a position of strength, while the Congress had led itself into the wilderness by resigning from the office. In view of the Congress attitude of non-cooperation, the British turned for support increasingly to the League backed ministries functioning in the Muslim majority provinces. In these circumstances, the Viceroy reiterated in August 1940 that full weight would be give to the views of the minorities in any future plan of constitutional revision. 'It goes without saying', he assured them, 'that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government'.

'His Majesty's Government have, on the whole, practically met the demand of the Muslim League for a clear assurance that no future constitution, interim or final, will be adopted by the British Government without the Muslim League's approval and consent'.

The Viceroy's statement was perhaps understandable in the context of the war and "Congress intransigence". But in view of the 'safeguards' already provided by the constitution Act of 1935 it could be considered both hasty and uncalled for. The government's seeming tilt towards the League emboldened the latter to dictate terms to the Congress and the majority community and later to British government itself. The Viceroy's statement could even be interpreted to imply implicit British sanction for India's partition if the League so insisted. The basic issue raised by the Viceregal statement, however, related to India's future constitutional advance, a federal question, and its relevance to India's unity as founded in the Act of 1935.

These two historic events in 1940 -- the passing of the Pakistan Resolution by the All India Muslim League at Lahore in its annual session on 23 March 1940 which

2. Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from April 1940 to April 1941, Published by Honourary Secretary, All India Muslim League (Delhi n.d.) Resolution No.2 pp. 10-11
caught the imagination of the Muslim mind and the Viceregal Declaration in August 1940 popularly known as August offer which gave clear assurance to the Muslim League that no future constitution, interim or final, would be adopted by the British Government without its approval and consent substantially helped in the emergence of "third party" in the political firmament of India.

In order to trace the emergence of this 'third party' or "Muslim leviathan" in the history of India after 1940s it is necessary to analyse the impact of Pakistan Resolution among the Muslims of India and the role of Viceregal 'assurance'.

Pakistan was not explicitly mentioned; nor was it clear from the language of the resolution whether a single Muslim state of both "zones" had been envisioned or two separate "autonomous" independent states, one is the North-west, the other in the Eastern zone. But India's newspaper headlines pronounced the Lahore resolution as 'Pakistan' Resolution and so it became popular among the Muslim masses and 'Hindu' press.

The Muslim League leaders and political workers were not content with the passing of the resolution. They busied themselves carrying on an effective propaganda in favour of Pakistan. Again and again Jinnah spoke on the political future of India and emphasized the two-nation
theory, the desirability, in fact, the inevitability of Pakistan, and the need of unity among all the Muslims of India. He tried to put the Pakistan plan in its proper context of Indian historical, political, social, religious and constitutional conditions.

The Pakistan slogan was catching on among rapidly increasing sections of Indian Muslims for a variety of reasons. The glamour of Pakistan, quite unmistakeably, led large sections of the Muslim population to accept readily the two-nation theory. The League had conquered the bulk of the middle classes, as well as the lower middle classes. To Muslim peasants of Bengal and Punjab, Pakistan was being presented as the end of Hindu Zamindar and Bania exploitation. Of greater significance, perhaps was the fact that Pakistan promised 'the hedging off of a part of India from competition by the established Hindu business groups or professional classes so that the small intelligentsia could find employment'.

The reorganization of the All India Muslim League in Bengal got momentum generally after the adoption of the Pakistan Resolution. In Bengal the
idea of Pakistan for the Muslims had so strong effect on the Muslims that they abandoned their popular leader A.K. Fazlul Haq who was expelled from the Muslim League by the end of 1941, but did not give up the Pakistan creed. As a matter of fact, the incident gave "impetus to the activities of the League in Bengal". After the expulsion of A.K. Fazlul Haq from the Muslim League, in a statement, Suhrawardy, Muslim League leader observed: "We shall now be able to build the Muslim League on more solid and sure foundations and include within its fold only those who believe in Muslim solidarity and unity and the universal brotherhood of Islam and the goal of Pakistan and are capable of making sacrifices in the cause of the community. We shall be able to achieve such real strength that not a single Muslim however highly placed he may be, will dare to defy the united will of the Muslim community."

A.K. Fazlul Haq's popularity received the strongest blow when he assumed that leadership in December 1941, of the Progressive Coalition Party which

3. All India Muslim League Annual Report for 1941. See Dawn, (Delhi), 26 April, 1942.

consisted of mostly Hindu members including the Hindu Mahasabha and the consequent formation of a coalition government.\(^5\) A.K. Fazlul Haq's new ministry was often called a 'Hindu Mahasabha Ministry' and when in January, 1942, he was travelling from Calcutta to Barisal, he was greeted with black flags and protests at almost every station. He had to face strong protests even in his hometown, Barisal.\(^6\)

On the one hand Fazlul Haq's popularity was decaying and on the other, the Muslim League was becoming more and more popular and strong. In January 1942, some important Muslim League leaders like Suhrawardy, Maulana Akram Khan, Nazimuddin, and Tamizuddin Khan undertook a fifteen day's tour of East and North Bengal. The delegation got unprecedented support everywhere. Even at a very small town like Feni in Noakhali, the delegation was given a rousing reception by a gathering of over 50,000 people.\(^7\) The enthusiasm continued and that led

---

5. The Progressive Assembly Party was converted to Progressive Coalition Party on 28 November, 1941. It included 47 members of the Ministerialist Coalition, 19 members of the Krishak Proja Shamiti, 27 of the Forward Bloc, 12 independent scheduled caste members and 11 Hindu Mahasabha members. It also enjoyed the responsive co-operation of 28 members of the official Congress. See Shila Sen, Muslim Politics in Bengal, p.132.


7. Ibid.
Quaid-i-Azam to observe on 24 April, 1943, in his speech at the open session of the Muslim League at Delhi, that "Bengal has shown that there is no more room for duplicity, Bengal has set an example from which others may learn." Towards the end of 1943 Abul Hashim was elected the General Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League. His organisational skill gave the Provincial Muslim League a new strength. In 1944 Bengal Muslim League enrolled five and a half lakhs of members and that exceeded the number "ever scored by any organization in the province not excluding the Congress". The process of reorganization of the Bengal Muslim League continued in all the districts of Bengal. It is significant to note that the All-India Muslim League, between 1942 and 1945, enrolled two million primary members in all over India, of which one million were from Bengal alone. This helped the All India Muslim League to put forward a very strong claim for solespokesman


of Muslim community of India and thus for Pakistan.\textsuperscript{11}

Even the central and provincial general elections in 1945 and 1946 were held on the Pakistan issue. Here also, Bengal took the lead. In the central elections, Bengal Muslim League was cent percent successful --- it captured all the six Muslim seats.\textsuperscript{12} In the provincial elections of 1946 as well, Muslim League's success was tremendous. It captured 113 seats out of a total of 119 Muslim seats.\textsuperscript{13} One of the main reasons for this unique success of Muslim in Bengal was its 'creed - 'Pakistan' which gave the common man an idea of freedom from the domination of Hindus as well as the British.

One the other hand, the Pakistan resolution in Punjab influenced the masses of Punjab Muslims slow and steadily. The main hindrance in Punjab for the growth of all India Muslim League was inter-communal alliance of Unionist Party. The leaders of this party Sikander Hayat and others were very popular. Moreover the Unionist

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Indian Annual Register, Vol. 11, Calcutta, 1945, p.35.
\item \textsuperscript{13} V.P.Menon, Transfer of Power, New Delhi, 1979,p.231.
\end{itemize}
Ministers loyally served British interests during the Second World War. They helped raise nearly a million recruits for the Indian Army, and organized savings and 'grow more food' campaigns on a massive scale. But this notable contribution to the war effort undermined their popularity at the very moment when the Muslim League was beginning to mount its challenge. The Unionist Ministry's difficulties were worsened by the untimely deaths of Chhotu Ram and Sikandar Hayat Khan which severely undermined its unity. The Muslim League eagerly took advantage of the growing divisions within the Unionist Party. It was also able to exploit the wartime discontent. British demands added to this as the Unionists were forced to carry out policies of grain requisition and the rationing of food supplies. The cardinal principle of maintaining rural stability was thus abandoned because of the pressing needs of the war effort.

Pakistan Resolution was not welcomed by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan. While he supported the final resolution, he yet endeavoured to advocate full provincial

14. As a result of the efforts of the 'grow more food' campaigns, the area under food crops in the Punjab in 1942-3 was nearly half a million acres more than the previous record of 1933-34. 'Punjab Fortnightly Report', 24 June 1944, cited in Ian Talbot, Punjab and the Raj, 1849-1947, (Delhi, 1988) p.142.

15. Ibid. p.143.
autonomy as an alternative to partition. To him, partition meant disrupting the Punjab and the Unionist Party, and he was not prepared to accept this. He sided with the League to express his solidarity with the Muslims of the subcontinent, but he was not at all in favour of the idea of partition. It was at once a repudiation of his Unionist Party's basic platform of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh coexistence, and of his potential to win personal leadership over the League.

Jinnah's speech in the Lahore session was received enthusiastically by the gathering and Sikandar must have known that his days of aspiring to supreme leadership of the Muslims of India were numbered. The glamour of Pakistan created such an enthusiasm in the Punjab that even in the heart of his home province during the Muslim League session in 1940, Sikandar heard for the first time in his life "Sikandar Murdabad". Hearing that most popular curse connected to his own name in Lahore must have given him pause.

The events after the Pakistan Resolution were most irritating to the Punjab Premier. The pro-Pakistan and the anti-Pakistan movements that followed the Pakistan Resolution were irritating to the ruling non-communal Unionist Party. Although the party was bound to support the League under the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, a strong non-Muslim element in the province, and some eminent non-
Muslims within the Unionist fold, such as Sir Chhotu Ram, were strongly opposed to the idea of Pakistan. This element favoured the strongest possible resistance to the League's scheme. On the other hand, the Premier was equally pressurized by the League; on one occasion Muslim students forced him to donate money for a Pakistan Conference, so as to commit him to the Pakistan idea. The Premier was so much embarrassed that a few days before the Jinnah's visit to the Punjab he had asked the League to drop its Pakistan scheme. But his was a voice crying in the wilderness; and due to his ineffectiveness Sir Sikandar decided that he should dissociate himself from the League by resigning from its Working-Committee.

In an effort to save his political skin, the Premier expressed a desire to be relieved from the Premiership of Punjab and to be appointed instead to the Viceroy's Council. Later he had to drop his idea because there was no alternative candidate who could cope with the complex situation in the Punjab. Thus there was no chance for a reasonable escape for Sir Sikandar. In short, in order to

---

16. His article in Civil and Military Gazette, 12 March, 1941; for his views on Pakistan, see Viceroy to Secretary of State, 6 April, 1940, Linlithgow Collection.

17. Civil and Military Gazette, 13 April, 1940.

18. Ibid., 14 February, 1941.

19. Governor to Viceroy, 4 March, 1941, Linlithgow Collection.

20. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 5 April, 1941; 29 August, 1941, Linlithgow Collection.
placate the non-Muslims, Sikandar delivered a speech in the Punjab Assembly denouncing the Pakistan scheme: "A Muslim Raj here and a Hindu Raj elsewhere... if that is what Pakistan means I will have nothing to do with it."

After this the Premier avoided close association with the League's meetings. Following the Jinnah's visit to the Punjab, Sir Sikandar had been invited to attend the League's annual session at Madras in 1941, but he refused to go, saying that he was very busy in his own province. This was as well, because the Madras session expressed even more precisely than before its determination to fight for the achievement of Pakistan. However despite his lack of interest in the League's affairs, the Premier did not resign his seat on the League's Working Committee. He thought that if he resigned, his place would be filled by a person hostile to the British.

And although Sir Sikandar was considered an opponent of the Pakistan scheme, the League leader re-appointed him as a member of the Working Committee. It looked as if there was no alternative for both of them, but to maintain the status quo, at least for the time being.


22. Viceroy to Secretary of State 18 April, 1941, Linlithgow Collection.

23. Viceroy to Secretary of State 7 September 1941, Ibid.
The Pakistan Resolution electrified and stimulated the activities of students of Muslim community in Punjab. In Punjab the Unionist Party's control of the Punjab Muslim League severely restricted its propaganda activity in the countryside. Most of this kind of work was left to the Punjab Muslim Students Federation. It had been reorganized by Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi, Ibrahim Ali Chisti and Hameed Nizami in 1937. The Federation strongly supported demand for Pakistan and organized a number of conferences to carry the message of the League to Muslims throughout the province. The Federation held an Educational Conference in Lyallpur on February 15 and 16, 1941, which was presided by Sir Abdullah Haroon, a veteran Leaguer and philanthropist from Sind. After the Lahore Resolution, the Punjab Muslim Students Federation gradually became more and more critical of Sikandar Hayat, as it felt that he remained a Unionist whose loyalties lay with the Britishers rather than with the Muslims. Students also gained the impression that he consistently tried to sabotage their efforts to promote the Pakistan Movement. A Special Pakistan Conference organized by the Federation on March 2, 1941 was presided over by the Quaid-i-Azam. The Quaid congratulated the students on their activism. Then the Federation set up a Pakistan Rural Propaganda Subcommittee to popularize the idea of Pakistan in rural areas through students visiting these areas in their vacations. During the course of a twenty-day tour, the
Committee visited fifty villages in each of which it opened a primary branch of Muslim League. Not all the members of the Punjab Muslim Students Federation were as anxious as Niazi to plunge into the fray against the Unionists. Its President, Mian Bashir Ahmed, tried to drop the idea that the Federation should hold a Pakistan Day celebration in 1942. His resignation, ostensibly on health grounds, paved the way, however, for greater activity. The Federation thereafter divided up the province into four zones and sent students propagandists to work full-time in each during May and July 1943. This was to be a useful dress-rehearsal for the students' propaganda campaigns in the Punjab countryside during the 1946 elections. Thus the students played an important and crucial role in the consolidation of All India Muslim League in Punjab after the passage of Pakistan Resolution.

Viceregal Declaration in August 1940 also gave a great impetus to the strengthening of All India Muslim League. At the time of Linlithgow's arrival in

27. Ibid., p.211.
1936 British policy in India was to implement the provisions of Government of India Act 1935. It provided for an all-India federation. Linlithgow strove to implement the federal section of the 1935 Act. The underlying concept of an all-India federation was to preserve the unity of the country. Yet it is ironical that it was during the Viceroyalty of Linlithgow that the demand for Pakistan had its start and early development. The clash of politics, the struggle for power, the wrangle for ascendancy, and the scramble for gains on the part of the political organizations, the politicians and the princes, the federal scheme became a tragic casualty. Moreover Linlithgow's drive towards federation was ended prematurely by the outbreak of the IIInd World War 1939-45.

In order to offset Congress hostility during the war Linlithgow encouraged the Muslim League to adopt an intransigent attitude towards the Congress. Such an attitude was natural enough in the circumstances. But Linlithgow's war-time policy at times went beyond a mere encouragement of opposition to the Congress: caught in the web of his anti-Congress manoeuvreings, Linlithgow at crucial junctures provided a certain amount of reasonably direct support to those within Muslim League who were

pressing for a separate Muslim state. This was clearly expressed in the Viceregal Declaration in the form of "August offer" of 1940 which gave clear "assurance" to the Muslim League.

Congress-League antagonism and the war time circumstances paved the way for the August offer in 1940. Linlithgow remained satisfied with the Congress-League rift. Jinnah would continue to blow hot and cold, but he would not obstruct any constitutional initiative made by the British, and they could look in general for the help of the Muslim League.29

Linlithgow was understandably dismayed when neither the Congress nor Muslim League allowed their members to join the War Committees and the Civic Guards, the formation of which he announced on 5 June. War Committees would be set up in every district to organize people and to disseminate official information. The Civic Guards were organized from volunteers to help the regular police maintain order.30 Both the Congress and League, however, decided to set up their own organizations for civil defence, and the Viceroy considered yet again the possibility of making a move 'at the right moment' which would bring the two parties into the Executive Council.31 With

29. Viceroy to Secretary of State, (T), 28 June and 1 July 1940, Linlithgow Collection.

30. Times of India, 6 June 1940.

31. Viceroy to Secretary of State, (T), 10 June 1940, Linlithgow Collection.
the fall of France on 27 June 1940, Linlithgow confessed that he was willing to reconsider his attitude about not appearing to take sides, if the League was willing to enter the Executive Council and the Congress remained intransigent. Jinnah was anxious 'above all things' to get into the administration, but refused to lift the ban on Muslim Leaguers serving in the War Committees - they would only be allowed to go into civil defence organizations set up by the government if and when his party came into the Executive Council.

The support of Indian parties at this time was must as the German invasions of Holland and Belgium on 10 May 1940, and the British withdrawal from Dunkirk on 27 May, exposed Britain to a possible German attack. England faced the Axis singlehanded, and this fact was at least partly responsible for a changed role for India in the Imperial defence machine. India was of vital importance because of her resources, her manpower and the economic potential east of Suez.

In these circumstances, the Congress Working Committee made another offer on 3 July 1940. If the British would acknowledge that the complete independence

32. Linlithgow to Amery, 27 June 1940, Ibid.
33. Viceroy to Secretary of State, (T) 28 June 1940, Ibid.
of India was the only solution to the political deadlock, the Congress would join a provisional National Government, formed of representatives of all parties. Only such a government, Congress claimed, would be able to organize effectively the material and moral resources of India for defence.\textsuperscript{34} The British Cabinet, however, frowned on the Viceroy's proposal for a British constitutional initiative, especially as the Congress and League had yet to reconcile their differences.\textsuperscript{35} An indignant Churchill, rejected Linlithgow's suggestion that the cabinet promise in advance to frame at the conclusion of the War, a constitution to which representatives of the principal Indian parties would agree. The cabinet agreed merely to an enlarged Executive Council and the setting up of a War Advisory Committee.\textsuperscript{36} In these circumstances 'August offer' was declared in August 1940.

The All-India Muslim League was apparently satisfied with the British stipulation in the August offer of consultation with the minorities in any future constitutional discussions, and its assurance that they

\textsuperscript{34} See All India Congress Committee file no. G-32/K.W-1, Part I, 1940, pp.31-43.

\textsuperscript{35} Viceroy to Prime Minister, (T), 18 July 1940 and Prime Minister to Viceroy, (T), 16 July, Linlithgow Collection.

\textsuperscript{36} Prime Minister to Viceroy, 28 July 1940, Ibid.
would not transfer their 'responsibilities' to any
government whose authority "is directly denied by large
and powerful elements in India's national life'. This
meant that the British would ignore the Congress demand
for independence. It also ensured the Jinnah that the
League was not ignored in any settlement between the
Congress and the British. Not surprisingly, the Muslim
League Working Committee now allowed Leaguers to join the
war committees.37

In the shadow of Pakistan Resolution and
Viceregal offer All India Muslim League amended its aims
and objects in its next annual session at Madras in 1941
to propagate the idea of Pakistan and to strengthen its
organization. Resolution No. 2 of the session amended
the aims and objects of the All India Muslim League.
Section 2(a) of the Constitution was substituted with
this: "(i) The establishment of completely independent
states formed by demarcating geographically contiguous
units into regions which shall be so constituted, with
such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that
areas in which the Muslims are necessarily in a
majority, as in the North Western and Eastern zones of
India, shall be grouped together to constitute Independent
States as Muslim Free National Homelands in which the

37. Fortnightly Report for Bombay for first half of Sept.
1940, Home Political file No. 18/9/40.
constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign. (ii) That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in the above mentioned units and regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; (iii) That in other parts of India where the Musalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.  

Abdul Hamid Khan, Chairman of the Reception Committee of this session, declared that the demand for Pakistan "does not run counter to the idea of India's political unity, nor does it mean the vivisection of India,... since because that unity was never real, the basis of Pakistan has existed all the time in this country." After this session a effective and massive propaganda was started by the Muslim leaders in favour of Pakistan scheme. Again and again Jinnah spoke on the political future of India and emphasised the two-nation

38. Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from April, 1940 to April 1941 published by the Honourary Secretary, All India Muslim League (Delhi:n.d.), pp.39-40.
39. Civil and Military Gazette. 15 April, 1941.
theory, the desirability, in fact, the inevitability of Pakistan. He tried to put the Pakistan scheme in context of Indian historical, political, social, religious and constitutional conditions. To Jinnah the Hindus and some Muslims had spread the false idea that the Muslim minorities in Hindu majority provinces would have to migrate en bloc if Pakistan was realized. The Quaid-i-Azam told the Muslims that this was not merely wrong but an insidious move to frighten the Muslims and thus to alienate them from the Muslim League. He explained them, whether India was partitioned or not, the Muslims of Hindu provinces would always remain minorities. By opposing the idea of Pakistan they could not improve their position, but they would obstruct the freedom of a majority of Muslims in the subcontinent.  

Jinnah declared in the historical and political context that Muslim India and Hindu India existed on the physical map and questioned where was the country which was going to be partitioned? Where was the nation which was going to be divided? Where was the Central National Government whose authority was going to be violated? To the charge that the Pakistan scheme was impracticable, Jinnah pointed out that autonomous

41. Ibid. pp.189-190.
provinces were already in existence under the 1935 constitution, and in some of them the Muslims predominated while others were mainly Hindu. Their reconstitution into "geographically, contiguous, homogeneous, independent zones" was the most feasible and practicable scheme. The ideal of Pakistan presupposed Indian freedom and independence. In fact, the achievement of independence would be brought very much nearer by quickly agreeing to the principle of partition than by any other method. The Muslims did not want to harm or injure any other community or interest. They did not want to block progress. They asked for the barest justice. They wanted to live "an honourable life as free men, and we stand for free Islam and free India." To yield to the demands of the Congress would "amount to prejudging the consideration of the future constitution" of India and would put Muslim India "under the heels of a Hindu Raj." Muslim India would resist this "with all the power it can command."

El Hamza attributed the Muslim hardening of the "ideology of hatred and passive insult" fostered by Gandhi and his followers. A "few months" of Congress rule

42. Ibid. pp.190-192.
43. Ibid. p. 193.
44. Statesman, 25 December, 1941.
under the dictation of Gandhi had given the Muslims an unforgettable taste of things to come.\textsuperscript{45} Z.A. Suleri gave three main reasons behind the formulation of the demand for Pakistan: Muslim, having ruled India before the advent of the British, were entitled to rule at least the Muslim majority areas; Hindu and Muslim philosophies of life and ways of life were so far apart from each other that it was "impossible for them to live together"; Muslims were convinced that their economic and social problems could be solved only by an approach to Islam, and this was impracticable until they had a State of their own.\textsuperscript{46}

Quit India Movement of Indian National Congress which was started on 8 August 1942 and British retaliation against it created circumstances favourable to All India Muslim League. It was a God sent opportunity for the strengthening of the Muslim League. The Congress was outlawed for the three years, its ablest cadres imprisoned, its funds seized and its organization virtually broken. After the arrest of the Congress leaders in August 1942, political activities in India came to a stand still. In this peculiar vacuum the Muslim League flourished unprecedently. It denounced the "Quit


\textsuperscript{46} Z.A. Suleri, The Road to Peace and Pakistan (Lahore: 1945), p.50 cited in Ibid. p.136.
India movement as an attempt to establish the "Hindu Raj" and to 'deal a death blow to the Muslim goal of Pakistan.' The League's tirade was useful to the Government of India which had switched its publicity machine against the Congress to represent it as pro-Axis.

Jinnah made the best political use of this peculiar vacuum in strengthening and consolidation of Muslim League and its hold over the masses of the Muslim community of Indian subcontinent. Jinnah modelled his campaigning style on Congress lines. From now onward the Muslim League grew from strength to strength. But this strength was the result of League's efforts and propaganda. Muslim League drastically restructure its programme and organization.

In 1941, a Conference of the presidents and secretaries of all the provincial Muslim League was held, with the aim of establishing a link between the centre and the provinces for coordinating their activities. In order to intensify the League's programme, provincial committees were enjoined to convene regular district conferences and to train a large number of workers who were to tour the province to propagate the ideals of the Muslim League among the Muslim masses. The provincial committee was also required to embark upon a recruitment campaign to

47. Sherwani, Latif, *Pakistan Resolution to Pakistan*, pp.72-3.
enrol at least ten percent of the Muslim population as primary members of the League.\textsuperscript{48} There was a visible increase in the League's activities; \textit{Dawn} carried a column 'Weekful of the League's activities' highlighting the various meetings and programmes of the Muslim League. To educate and convert Muslim opinion, special 'Pakistan conferences' were organized by the district and provincial committees. Prominent Muslim leaders from other provinces were invited to address the gatherings.\textsuperscript{49} In order to keep in touch with the districts, the central and provincial leaders worked out a programme of extensive touring: the highlight being a visit by Jinnah himself.\textsuperscript{50} Speakers were trained to do propaganda work for the Muslim League. Some of the full-time workers were paid from party funds and lived in party premises.\textsuperscript{51}

\textit{All India Muslim League} incepted new departments to increase its political activities among the Muslim masses and educated classes. For instance a separate information, propaganda and publicity department was created. A committee of writers was appointed to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{48} \textit{Dawn}, 2 November, 1941.
\item \textsuperscript{49} \textit{Ibid.}, 2 November, 1941.
\item \textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid.}, 26 October, 1941.
\item \textsuperscript{51} \textit{Ibid.}, 24 November, 1942.
\end{itemize}
write pamphlets on the social, economic, and political problems of the Muslims. These were meant for the consumption of Muslim intelligentsia and middle classes of Muslim community of India. Later these were published under the titles of *Pakistan Literature Series* and *Home Study Series* so that the public may receive without delay and trouble all literature, pamphlets and books of the All-India Muslim League. At about the same time the Muslim Youth Study Circle started a monthly journal, *Spirit of Youth*, to serve as a beacon of light to Muslim young men all over the India. Leaflets and brochures were issued by the Muslim League publicity department and were distributed free of cost to public libraries. Poetry and songs on Pakistan were recited publicly. A particularly popular song was: 'Moo mein Kalma, hath mein talwar, larke lenge ham Pakistan.'

To carry on the regular propaganda, Muslim League started newspapers and magazines. The most significant step in this direction was the foundation of *Dawn* in October 1941. 'The *Dawn* wrote the editor, 'supplies the long felt want of a suitable medium for the Muslims and other whose voice could not be heard above the

52. Ibid., 24 November, 1941.
53. Ibid., 9 November, 1941.
54. Ibid., 18 February, 1942.
The Muslim League rapidly built up a strong press—either by starting new newspapers or by taking over older established ones and persuading them to adopt the Muslim League line. Thus Delhi had Anjam, Jung and Manshoor; Lahore produced Inqilab, Nawa-i-waqt, Paisa Akhbar and Zamindar; Hamdam and Asre-Jadib came from Lucknow and Calcutta respectively. There were a host of other lesser known regional newspapers. The gruesome stories contained in the Pirpur report were serialized in Dawn and Manshoor under the title, 'It Shall Never Happen Again.'

It would be much easier to mobilize popular enthusiasm upon simple religious issues than upon complicated socio-economic questions. Muslim League leaders realized it in clear terms. Moreover, questions such as representation in the legislatures and services were of interest mainly to the educated Muslims; the vast masses had little interest in them. To arouse in them a passionate opposition to the Congress it was necessary to excite religious fears. A newly awakened consciousness easily responds to semi-religious calls, and the Congress itself had used that type of appeal to rouse mass

55. Ibid., 26 October, 1941.
56. G.Rizvi, Linlithgow and India, pp. 125, 126.
consciousness among the Hindus. The Muslim League now used it with equal success. It secured the services of Pir Saheb of Manki Sharif, Pir Jamiat-Ali Shah and Makhdum Raza Shah of Multan. The *modus operandi* of the *pirs* and mullahs was to appeal to the latent religious prejudices. They raised the cry of 'Islam in danger' and exhorted the Muslims to support the demand for Pakistan. Sir Malcolm Darling writes about the Punjab thus: 'The cry was raised "Islam is in danger" within certain areas very crude variations, threatening those who opposed the League with hell and damnation and even with exclusion from burial in a Muslim cemetery.'

The Muslim League's message to the villagers in Punjab was simple. It called on them in the name of Islam to support the Quaid-e-Azam in his struggle for Pakistan. Religious festivals such as *Id* were used by the League to spread its message and to 'promote unity and social solidarity amongst the Muslim's of India'. Moseques, because of their importance as centres of Muslim Life, were used to spread League propaganda.

---


Propagandists were advised when they visited a village to join in the prayers at the local mosque and gain its Imam's permission to hold a meeting there.  

League meetings were regularly held in mosques especially after the Friday prayers. The Quran was also frequently paraded as the League's symbol and pledges to support it being made on it.  

Students who played an important part in the Muslim League's rural propaganda campaign had been especially trained to appeal to the rural population on religious lines. The lectures which the Aligarh students attended at their League Workers Training Camp before they left for the Punjab were on such topics as the Muslim League in the Light of Islam and Islamic History and the religious background to the demand for Pakistan.  

Students from the Punjab Muslim Students Federation were advised to follow the Prophet's example in all things during their propaganda visits to the villages. They were to join in the prayers at the Mosques or better still lead them like 'Holy Warriors'. Their speeches were to be filled with emotional appeal and to always commence with a text from the Quran, invoking God's protection and praising His Wisdom.  


Earlier in 1938 the Governor of Bombay in a Confidential Report conveyed to Viceroy the Muslim feeling of religious insecurity, "In Bombay city, however, there was clearly an undercurrent of feeling amongst Muslims that politically they being swamped. Nearly every sermon preached during Muharram had for its theme 'Our religion is in danger', and almost every Maulvi who preached appeared to be propagating the present views of the Muslim League." 65

When these religious preachers told the simple Muslim peasants in resounding political speeches about their manifold disabilities, from which the magic of 'Pakistan' would free them, they would have been less than human if they had not believed. The Indian cultivators were no more proof against propaganda than is the small farmer in any other country—particularly when a new heaven and a new earth were being promised if they would only vote a certain way. The growth of the League's popularity may to a large extent be attributed to the efforts of the pirs and mullahs. 66

The Muslim League also relied heavily for its campaign upon the voluntary efforts of students,

---

66. Rizvi, Linlithgow and India, p. 126.
particularly from Aligarh Muslim University and Dacca University.\textsuperscript{67} The Foundation of the All-India Muslim Students Federation did much to make the League a party of the masses. The purpose of the Students Federation was to 'rouse political consciousness' amongst the Muslim Students and to prepare them to take their proper share in the struggle for the freedom of the country; and within three years Jinnah complimented the students for having 'succeeded in awakening the political consciousness of Muslim India from one end to the other end of this subcontinent.'\textsuperscript{68} A uniformed Muslim national guard was formed. The main purpose of enlisting and training the national guards was to 'create in them a spirit of service and sacrifice and to make them a disciplined body of enthusiastic self-less workers for the social, economic and political uplift of the masses'.\textsuperscript{69}

A variety of factors and circumstances contributed in the consolidation of All India Muslim League during the period, 1936 to 1943. But the role of Jinnah was crucial which needs analysis here. The overall strategy that he followed provides a fascinating study in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{67} M.Husain, 'Dacca University and the Pakistan Movement', Philips and Wainwright (eds.), \textit{Partition of India}, pp.369-73.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, \textit{Speeches and Writings of Mr.Jinnah}, i, pp.238-39.
\item \textsuperscript{69} \textit{Dawn}, 15 November, 1941.
\end{itemize}
itself. He was a superb tactician and the various moves that he made were all parts of a master plan, the supreme objective of which was the accumulation and concentration of enormous power in his hands - an objective which he could rationalize in terms of the well-being and social goals of the Muslim nation and Pakistan. A study of this kind may possibly improve our understanding of the political developments that took place during the thirties and forties leading to the establishment of Pakistan.

Drawing his information from the correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian*, Edwin S. Montagu, secretary of state for India, 1917-22, recorded: 'In Bombay, there was only one man-Jinnah. At the root of Jinnah's activities is ambition.'\(^\text{70}\) Similarly, from all accounts he had complete confidence in his ability and judgement and was extremely domineering in his attitude towards others. Lord Casey, at one time governor of Bengal, wrote: "He is dogmatic and sure of himself; I would believe that it does not ever occur to him that he might be wrong."\(^\text{71}\) Jinnah is reported to have said to a rival politician, 'you try to find out what will please people and you then act accordingly. My way of action is quite different. I first decide what is right and I do it. The people come around me and the opposition


vanishes." Some of these attitudes and postures were interpreted differently by his admirers and adversaries. His flashes of anger, his bitter sarcasm and righteous indignation in the law courts, have become legendary. However, it may be pointed out that with all his supreme confidence in himself and his over bearing nature, there was a strong streak of hardheaded realism in Jinnah which shaped and influenced his political behaviour. He was always aware of the limitations of his strategy and waited for the right opportunity to extract the best bargain from a given situation.

In fact, there were two Jinnahs - the Jinnah of the twenties and the Jinnah of the late thirties and of the forties. During the twenties Jinnah's object was to reach a Hindu-Muslim settlement on the basis of an acceptable compromise. Later, in the late thirties and forties, when this approach had failed, he adopted a seemingly rigid attitude and wanted to negotiate from a position of considerable strength which was to be based on the political power which he had to mobilize during later period.

During the twenties and early thirties, Jinnah genuinely believed that through a process of mutual

accommodation and adjustment of claims and demands, Hindus and Muslims could come to an understanding and thus facilitate the advancement of their country towards responsible self-government. His opposition to separate electorates is too well known to need any documentation. It is also well known that in 1919, before the joint select committee on the Government of India Bill, he declared, 'Nothing will please me more when that day comes' when all distinctions between Hindus and Muslims would have disappeared.  

In December, 1928, before the all parties national convention, he pleaded for the adoption of what he regarded as moderate proposals under which Muslims would be given one third representation in the central legislature and that 'residuary powers' would be vested in the provinces. These proposals were not only rejected, but Jinnah's representative capacity as a spokesman of the Muslims of India was questioned. This has been interpreted as another great mistake that the Congress leaders made. It is reported that Jinnah took this to heart. 'He had tears in his eyes as he said, 'Jamshed, this is the parting of the ways.'

74. H.Bolitho, op.cit., p.95.
So far as Jinnah was concerned, this turned out to be a tragic turning point in his life. He had found that his whole method of trying to bring about a constitutional settlement by playing the role of a mediator had broken down. This method could work in law courts or in legislatures. But the whole atmosphere of Indian politics had changed as a result of the emergence of mass politics. During 1928-29, he was not only faced with this failure in his political life, but also with a traumatic experience involving first separation from his wife and later her death in 1929. Kanji Dwarkadas, who was a friend of both Jinnah and his wife, Ruttie Jinnah, wrote: 'He never recovered from his loneliness, and this loneliness added to the bitterness of his life; and I must add that this bitterness, born out of this personal loss and disappointment travelled into his political life.'

The sense of helplessness that he suffered from and the low estimates that he had formed of himself at that time were best described by Jinnah himself: 'At that time there was no pride in me and I used to beg from the Congress... I began to feel that neither could I help India, nor change the Hindu mentality, nor could I make the Mussalmans realize their precarious position. I

felt so disappointed and so depressed that I decided to settle down in London. Not that I did not love India; but I felt utterly helpless. I kept in touch with India. At the end of four years I found that the Musalmans were in the greatest danger. I made up my mind to come back to India, as I could not do any good from London. Having no sanction behind me I was in the position of a beggar and received the treatment that a beggar deserved.  

Thus, it was only towards the end of 1935 that he returned to India to organize and consolidate the All India Muslim League for the forthcoming provincial elections. From this period onwards, one could see that he had decided to embark on a course radically different from that he had followed in his earlier life. The Muslim community had also been looking for a great saviour and they regarded it as their religious duty to follow a leader who was prepared to unite the community and bring earthly glory to Islam. Thus, there took place a congruence between the personal needs and ambitions of a leader like Jinnah and the needs of the Muslim Community. Since he could not get along with others, he needed an organization which he could dominate and through which he could put forward his point of view. In the dominant role that he played in the Muslim League movement after 1937,

he found an outlet for the political talents and qualities of leadership he possessed.

What Jinnah had did for the consolidation of All India Muslim League and his position before 1940 need not be mentioned here for this has been already explained in the previous chapters above. During the 'first five year plan' (1937-41) of the Muslim League launched by Jinnah, the League activities spread all over the country. The Muslim League 'established a flag, a platform, and demonstrating the complete unity of the entire body of the Muslims', defined its goal of a separate homeland for the Muslims. Under the able leadership of Jinnah towards the end of 1941, the Muslim League launched its 'second five year plan'. This consisted of planning and building up 'the departments of national life of Muslim India'. In this the increased emphasis was on the educational, social and economic uplift of the Muslims. Shortly afterwards Jinnah emphasized and decided to appoint a National Planning Committee, which was to prepare the Muslims 'to participate in the national developments in the direction of commercial and agricultural expansion, and industrialization, and be ready for a gigantic and coordinated drive in the field of economic reconstruction, and then in the post war reconstruction.'

---

77. Dawn, 3 May, 1942.
78. Ibid., 2 November, 1941.
79. Ibid., 29 December, 1943.
consisted of technicians, economists, men of commerce and practical businessmen.

Jinnah also endeavoured to establish a Muslim Chamber of Commerce with view to encouraging commercial and industrial enterprise. The help of wealthy Muslims like the Raja of Mahmudabad, M.A.H. Ispahani, and Habib was enlisted. The Muslim Chamber of Commerce was finally to come into being in April 1945. Jinnah was also to initiate other economic ventures including banks, an insurance company, shipping lines and an airline. These ventures gave great impetus and momentum to the commercial aspirations of the Muslims. These were the attractions of Pakistan which attract the Muslim masses and Middle classes towards the Pakistan movement. Thus Jinnah was the mind behind the consolidation of Muslim League.

Ultimately in the annual session of All India Muslim League held at Delhi, Jinnah was in the position to declare that, "I say to the Musalmans... 100 million Musalmans are with us. When I say 100 million Musalmans, I mean that 99 percent of them are with us, leaving aside some who are traitors, cranks, supermen or lunatics - an evil from which no society or nation is free. The way in which I see them now is that the phoenix-like rise and regeneration of Muslim India from the very ashes of its

80. Ibid., 10 March, 1943.
ruination.... is a miracle. The people who had lost everything and who were placed by providence between the two stones of a mill, not only came into their own in a very short time, but became, after the British, socially the most solid, militarily the most virile, and politically the most decisive factor in modern India. Now it is time to take up the constructive programme to build up this nation so that it can march on the path of our goal of Pakistan... The goal is near, stand united, persevere and march forward.\(^81\)

Jinnah became more aggressive, more challenging and more authoritative. The reason appears to be consciousness of power lately acquired and of certain old injuries which could now be avenged therewith.

Muslim League's growing popularity, strength and its consolidation could be guaged from its increasing membership in various provinces and the results of by-elections since 1937 elections. Towards the end of 1941 the Madras Muslim League claimed a membership of 112,078. Typical was the report from the South Kanara district Muslim League: 'Last year there were only 4,200 members. This year there are 7,759 members.'\(^82\) In the Central Provinces the membership increased from 23,000 in 1938 to

---

82. *Dawn*, 9 November, 1941.
56,541 in 1943. In Bengal the growth of the Muslim League was phenomenal: in 1944 the League was claiming 550,000 members. In Sind the membership rose to over 300,000 in 1944. All over India there was an upsurge of the League's strength and popularity. Sixty-one by-elections were held for Muslim seats in the legislatures during 1937-48, and of those 47 were won by the Muslim League, 10 by independent Muslims, and only 4 by the Congress.

The results of next General Elections of 1945-46 further demonstrated the consolidation of All India Muslim League. The election result of 1945-46, in fact, also demonstrated the unsoundness of the 1937 Congress assumption, which led to its refusal to form a coalition ministry with the League in the United Provinces, where not even half the Muslim votes had been cast in its favour. Indeed, this refusal made the League a strong and powerful force by the time of the next General Elections, held in 1945-46. In 1937 the Muslim League gained no more than 48 percent of the total Muslim vote. On the contrary in 1945-46. The Muslim League won 428 out of a possible 492 provincial seats reserved for Muslims, as

83. Ibid. October, 1942.
84. Ibid. 18 January, 1944.
85. Ibid. 14 May, 1944.
against 109 in the elections of 1937. At the Centre, it bagged all 30 of the seats reserved for Muslims.

While the Congress emerged triumphant in the general constituencies which were predominantly Hindu, the Muslim League virtually established an exclusive claim to represent the Muslims in India, except in the North-West Frontier Province where Abdul Ghaffar Khan held the forces of communalism in check for a while. The League's progress in the Punjab was particularly remarkable: in 1937 it won only two seats, and of these one joined the Unionist Party which had as many as 90 seats. In 1946, on the other hand, the League secured 75 seats against 20 of the Unionist Party, of whom only 13 were Muslims. In Bengal, too, the League registered a major improvement in its position and popularity. The following figures give a comparative view of the League's province-wise position in 1937 and 1946 elections.86

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1946</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1946</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>N.W.F.P.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Sind</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.P.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>U.P.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

86. B.B. Misra, *The Unification and Division of India*, (Delhi, 1990), p.317.
The emergence of the League as the major representative body of Muslims in India and the electoral sanction it acquired in the Muslim majority provinces, in Bengal and north-west, created the necessary conditions for the emergence of partition.

By 1943, League ministries had been installed in Assam (August, 1942), Sind (October, 1943), Bengal (March 1943) and North-Western Frontier Province (May, 1943). The League's central leadership was asserting a tight control over provincial units and building up a volunteer corps (the National Guards), and Jinnah himself was well on the way toward, establishing his claim to be sole spokesman of Muslims of India with the right to be treated on equal terms with the 'Hindu' Congress under Gandhi.

In August, 1942 the process of non-Congress ministry-making was launched by British authorities in the provinces. Though it reflected the growing strength of Muslim League yet it was a story of role played by British authorities in encouraging the Muslim League somewhat directly. It exposed their policy of strengthening Muslim League to counter the Congress sponsored "quit India" movement of 1942. The movement had shaken the very foundations of Empire. Linlithgow advised Governors to explore the possibilities of forming non-Congress ministries in their provinces, in view of their
'propaganda value.'

The basic principle, then, behind the reconstruction of ministries in Assam, Sind, North Western Frontier Province and Bengal, was that, wherever possible, a counterpoise to the Congress should be built up in the provinces. To the extent that British policy resulted in the formation of League ministries in the Muslim majority provinces, they were responsible for the enhanced stature of the League, and the growth of the idea of Pakistan for All India Muslim League for the first time tasted power which became driving force in their efforts to consolidate it.

The arrests of Congress MLAs in Assaam led to the fall of the coalition ministry which had existed since 1937, and Mohammad Saadullah formed a new coalition with other parties represented in the legislature. In Sind, Allah Baksh was dismissed by Dow, on instructions from Linlithgow, because he had renounced his titled. Linlithgow had earlier been critical of the half-hearted manner in which Allah Baksh's ministry was carrying out the war effort, and the renunciation of his titles, which the Viceroy regarded as being inconsistent with his oath of office, gave Linlithgow an opportunity to dispose of


88. Fortnightly Report for Assam for the first half of September, 1942, Home Political file No.18/9/42.
The way was now open for G.H. Hidayatullah to form a ministry. Provincial Leaguers decided to join Hidayatullah's ministry against the wishes of Jinnah, who urged them not to enter a government in which they were not the dominant element. The provincial League passed a resolution asking Jinnah to abstain from giving instructions on provincial matters of which he did not know much, and supported the decision of the League Assembly to join the ministry. A new turn was given to ministerial politics when Hidayatullah decided to join the League. He stated that his Hindu Colleagues were being pressurized by the Congress, and in view of this and in the interests of his community, he had decided to join the League, Hidayatullah's decision surprised everyone, including provincial Leaguers, who had not been told of his intentions. The rationale behind his joining the League could have been his apprehension that Hindu ministers and their supporters might eventually walk out on him: in that event, he could

89. Viceroy to Governor of Sind, (T), 26 September, 1942, Linlithgow Collection.
90. Dow to Linlithgow, 22 October, 1942. See also Eastern Times, 25 October and 10 November, 1942.
best assure his future prospects of retaining the Premierships by lining up with the Muslim League.

The League extended its organization in Sind while it held power. By March 1943, nearly 30,000 members had been enrolled in the Thar Pakkar district alone. Whether this was done by the provincial League of its own accord or under instructions from the all-India body, is not known. It is possible that the provincial League took the initiative itself to strengthen its base against its Muslim opponents in Allah Baksh's Azad Muslim Party. For, if both parties resorted to communal propaganda, as they did during the by-election in Shikarpur the party which had the broader political base would be more likely to consolidate its position in the province.

All India Muslim League in the North Western Frontier Province was divided and could succeed in forming ministry after a lot of maneuverings. Divisions in the provincial League had discouraged Cunningham from installing a League ministry. The detention of eight of the twenty-one Congress legislators had reduced the party's majority in the assembly, but Cunningham turned down a suggestion from Feroze Khan Noon, a member of the Viceroy's Council, that the League could win the support of non-Congress M.L.A.s. 'The balance between the Congress and the non-Congress in the assembly is so

92. Fortnightly Report for Sind for first half of March, 1943, Home political file no. 18/3/43.
delicate that this would almost certainly mean a defeat for the ministry,' he informed Linlithgow on 28 September 1942. It was not until April 1943 that the League was able to form a ministry. Aurangzeb Khan wanted to form an intercommunal ministry, and solicited the support of the Akalis and the Mahasabha. The Akalis debated whether their interests would be served better by cooperation with the League or by joining 'nationalist' elements in the opposition. A statement by V.D.Savarkar, the Mahasabha leader, that where the formation of a Muslim League ministry was inevitable, Hindus and Sikhs might enter into a coalition with the League to further their interests, coupled with the refusal of Khan Saheb to guarantee a seat for the Akalis in a future Congress Ministry, induced Ajit Singh to accept a portfolio in Aurangzeb's cabinet. The Akalis joined the coalition on the understanding that the question of Pakistan would not be raised during the tenure of the ministry. The Mahasabha withdrew from the coalition following Aurangzeb's refusal to concede the speakership of the House to Mehr Chand Khanna; and Aurangzeb's ministry came to be known as the League-


95. Fortnightly Report for North Western Frontier Province for first half of May 1943, Home Political file no. 18/3/43.

Akali coalition. The ministry never acquire the support of more than 19 of the 43 members in the Assembly.  

In Bengal, since the start of the Quit India movement, Herbert had expressed dissolution with the conduct of the Huq ministry in all matters relating to the war effort. Thus Bengal provided an illustration of a Muslim League Ministry being brought into power almost solely by the inclination and action of governor. Huq's coalition with the Bose section of the Congress produced, in Herbert's opinion, a situation 'in which local officers are deterred from exercising firmness and initiative in dealing with disturbances.' Herbert thought that the dismissal of the ministry was 'increasingly called for consideration.' It was not that Herbert had any great faith in the advantages of a League ministry. This alternative would be 'little better, as its main concern would be to find more and better jobs for Muslims.' The circumstances of Huq's dismissal in April 1943 are best explained by Herbert himself. The Governor thought that the ministry was already tottering, that it could

97. Ibid., p.135.
98. Herbert to Linlighgow, 8 October 1942, Linlithgow Collection.
only maintain itself 'by pandering to the wishes of those whose votes kept it in existence.' A motion of no-confidence was to be moved in the assembly on 29 March, 1943. 'I felt, perhaps wrongly,' that yet another debate on such a motion resulting in the fall of the Ministry would further embitter the relations between parties to an extent which would make negotiations for a Ministry of all the parties quite impossible. 'If, on the other hand, Huq wanted to scrape through the session ... he would have continued his tricks.... Further, it would... have been exceedingly difficult for me to dismiss Huq despite his numerous acts of misconducts' Huq had announced publicly several times that he would resign if such an action would facilitate the formation of an all-parties ministry. Herbert felt that 'Huq's promise to resign, openly expressed in the Assembly, was an opportunity not to be neglected; and I must admit that I urged him pretty firmly to honour it, though "compulsion" is quite unfair description.'

Huq did not intend to resign when he came to see Herbert on 28 March, 'but... at some stage in the interview he decided that it might be to his advantage to do so if he subsequently played his cards well. This...

100. Herbert to Linlithgow, 7 April 1943, Ibid.
he succeeded in doing. He signed a draft letter of resignation prepared, not for his signature, but merely as a model, so that he could say that he was "framed" by the Governor; he undertook to see the Budget through the next day, thus allaying my mind until it was too late; and he asked for the announcement of his resignation to be postponed in order that he might spring it himself, wreck the budget and claim universal sympathy. When the House met on the 29th March, Huq stated that he had been made to resign by the Governor. The speaker then announced that the ministry did not exist and adjourned the assembly for a fortnight. On the 31st, Herbert proclaimed Section 93. 'I do feel that I have (shall I say?) blundered into the right solution in spite of all the political disadvantages,' concluded Herbert.

Herbert proclaimed section 93 while Huq still had a majority. He had won a division by 10 votes only on the previous day. But they were the votes of the Congress. 'The position was that he was in the hands of the party in sympathy with the disturbances which are prejudicing our war effort.'

101. Ibid.
102. Ibid.
103. Governor of Bengal to Viceroy, (T), 31 March 1943, Ibid.
With the support of 25 European MLAs in the Bengal legislature, Nazimudin, a Muslim League leader, formed a League ministry. Until now these European MLAs, always supported Huq. They openly said that they would oppose any new Huq ministry because they were 'disgusted' with his misgovernment and corruption. The new ministry contained no Muslim who was not a member of the Muslim League. Nazimuddin failed to get the support of the Congress Bose group, which had supported Huq, and the Mahasabha. Nazimuddin promised to 'take every possible measure to advance the war effort.'

Thus in 1943 and 1944, Muslim League ministries were in office in Bengal, Assam, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province. In the Punjab, the Unionist ministry was not a League administration. Its relations with Muslim League will be analysed below somewhere. But by 1943-44 the League could claim that it controlled, directly or indirectly, the provincial ministries of all the provinces which it included in the proposed Pakistan. The League had come a long way since 1937. It now possessed confidence born of roots among the people and of exercise of power.

104. Herbert to Linlithgow, 19 April 1943, Linlithgow Collection. See also Fortnightly Report for Bengal for Second half of April, 1943, Home Political file no. 18/4/43.
But the key to the League's future lay in the Punjab, the heartland of future Pakistan in North-West. Government House at Lahore and the Punjab politicians were at one: they wanted the status quo, fences between the communities to be mended, and a League ministry to be kept out. Thus it was in the Punjab that Jinnah launched a vigorous campaign to establish a League ministry in a province. Despite Jinnah's tireless efforts Muslim League failed to establish itself in Punjab politics until the general elections of 1945-46. It could not establish a Muslim League ministry in Punjab like other Muslim majority provinces.

A brief survey of All India Muslim League organization in Punjab and its relations with Unionist Party reveals many factors responsible for this failure of Muslim League in Punjab. Moreover wartime circumstances and British policy also needs analysis in this connection.

Since the Jinnah-Sikandar pact of 1937 there remained the 'Unionists' hold on the organization of Muslim League in Punjab. The League's activists had become impatient because under the 'Unionists' control its growth had ground to a complete halt. The Punjab League's local workers did not however appreciate this state of affairs. 'Ever since the annual meeting of the Muslim League in Lahore it is supposed to have had much greater aims and objects, but its workers are not at all active', wrote
Syed Ashraf Ali Tirmizi of the Ropar Muslim League, 'passing resolution after resolution does not serve any purpose. It is action that is needed... For the last three years those people responsible for running the (Punjab) League have proved by their actions that they do not want to achieve its aims... Do they consider it haram to come into the field of real action? Do they consider it haram even to serve their nation? Have they been placed on gadis for the sake of fame?... Today those outside the League are overjoyed to see the lack of discipline we have within it.'

The All-India Muslim League's investigation in October 1941 into the strength of its provincial organizations found that no Muslim League organization existed at all in the following ten districts of the Punjab: Ambala, Hoshiarpur, Shahpur, Jhelum, Mianwali, Jhang, Kangra, Dera Ghari Khan, Rohtak and Gujranwala. The total primary League membership of the seven city and six district branches, which were able to return reasonably accurate figures, was only just under 15,000. Even


more worrying for the League than the smallness of its grassroots membership was the fact that over a third of it came from the towns which were politically unimportant. Only in Sind was the League weaker in terms of the number of its primary members. Bombay had nearly double Punjab's number, U.P., eight times, whilst even the remote province of Baluchistan possessed a 1,000 more members. The Punjab League's membership figures could give a misleading impression of its position in the Punjab. The possession of elite support was for more important than that of a grassroots organization. None of the leading rural families had transferred their allegiance from the Unionist Party by that time. The League's primary membership records for Amritsar do, however, indicate that a few at least of the minor Piris and landowners were moving into its ranks.

Propaganda activity of the Punjab Muslim League in the countryside was severely restricted by the Unionist Party's control on its organization. Most of this kind of work was done by Punjab Muslim Students Federation, the activities of this federation have already been mentioned above in this chapter.

Despite the intensity of the Muslim League's propaganda campaign, its unfurling of the green flag of

107. Ibid., p.156.
Islam made little impact on the mass of the rural population. 'League attempts to penetrate the villages'; the Governor noted in July 1944, 'have been mainly confined to the somewhat disjointed tours by peripatetic members of the Muslim Students Federations, the distribution of propaganda pamphlets and approaches to village officials. These moves in spite of the Islamic appeal behind them have so far had little effect on the Muslim masses who are concerned with tribal and economic considerations (rather) than with party politics and do not appear to have affected the communal situation adversely.' The unionists continued to win district board and provincial assembly by-elections throughout 1944. In August, for example, they defeated the Muslim League in the Sialkot district board elections; they also retained the Hoshiarpur and Kangra and Jhajjar Legislative Assembly seats. The Muslim League was unable to field a rival candidate to Sardar Ghaus Mazari in the by-election which took place in its southern constituency in April 1945. In many of the western districts of the Punjab, it was faced with the same problem of having to resolve local factional rivalries which had impeded Mian Fazl-i-Husain's efforts to establish a popular base for the

Unionist Party there a decade earlier. As late as May 1945, the Muslim League could still only boast of a Punjab membership of 150,000.110

Muslim League's rural propaganda campaign achieved very limited success for 'its over-reliance on Islamic appeals to mobilize mass support.'111 The Unionists efforts during the elections and the Muslim League's earlier attempt in 1944 to use Islam as a mass mobilizer made little impact because their religious appeals were mediated by outsiders who lacked personal influence in the villages and because they were based on sources of Muslim authority, the Quran, the alim and the mosque which were unimportant to the illiterate 'pir-ridden' villagers.112 The Muslim League was only able to achieve a rural break through when it had won over the support of the landlords and Pirs who possessed personal authority in the villages and when it had addressed itself to the peasants' wartime grievances. It was not until late in 1944 that it switched its attention from organizing local branches to winning over the rural elite. At about the same time it first linked the demand for Pakistan with the solution of the peasants' wartime grievances.

110. Eastern Times (Lahore), 23 May, 1945.
111. Ian Talbot, *op.cit.* p. 162.
112. Ibid. p. 163.
difficulties. Worsening wartime dislocation, Jinnah's growing prestige in national politics and the death of Sir Chhotu Ram, the Punjab League's most redoubtable opponent, all combined to assist this new strategy of the League.

Another factor which restricted the growth of Muslim League's influence in Punjab politics was British policy towards Punjab. It was evident that British authorities had played an important role in the formation of Muslim League ministries in the other Muslim majority provinces-Sind, Assam, Bengal and N.W.F.P. British policy in Punjab was solely guided by their wartime exigencies. 'The procurement of the necessary surplus wheat from the Punjab is more important than any political considerations, any interests of the ministers and in the last resort, the continuance of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab,' declared Viceroy in 1943. The Unionist Ministers loyally served British interests during the War. They helped raise nearly a million recruits for the Indian Army, and organized savings and 'grow more food' campaigns on a massive scale. But this notable contribution to the war effort undermined their popularity at the very moment when the Muslim League was beginning mount its challenge.

113. Linlithgow to Glancy, 17 August, 1943 Linlithgow Collection.
Sikandar Hayat Khan died in December 1942 which was a blow to his party and to the British, who acknowledged that they owed the success of the war effort in the Punjab to him. Sikandar had maintained political stability in the province, Jinnah failed in his attempt to have a say in the selection of a new leader of the Unionist Party, and therefore, of the Punjab, Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, was chosen as the new leader of the Unionists. A motion of confidence, moved by Chhotu Ram, the Revenue Minister, at the meeting of the Unionist Party, was seconded by Mamdot, president of the Punjab Muslim League. Linlithgow doubted Khizar's ability to stand up to Jinnah, but he thought that Glancy, who had became Governor of the Punjab in 1942, was 'now well in the saddle' and in a position to give him great deal of assistance. The Viceroy was probably implying that Jinnah should not be allowed to disturb the war effort in the Punjab. Linlithgow did not make clear whether he would have encouraged Khizar to break with Jinnah, if necessary, thus reversing his policy of using influence with Sikandar in 1941-especially as the Congress leaders were now in jail and the Quit India movement had been brought under control; and the need for Muslim unity,


115. Linlithgow to Amery, 11 January 1943, Lithgow Collection.
under Jinnah's leadership, may not have appeared so urgent. Linlithgow had regarded Jinnah as unreliable and uncooperative as the Congress in the matter of supporting the war effort, and was apprehensive that Jinnah, always out to extract the most favourable political bargain - in this case from the British - might hamper the war effort in the Punjab if he managed to tighten his hold over the Unionist Ministry, or actually establish a Muslim League ministry in the province. Therefore, Glancy must make it clear that he would use his special powers to prevent the fall of the Unionist ministry. 116

But the Punjab Muslim League exploited the growing wartime discontent in a number of ways and eagerly took advantage of the growing divisions within the Unionist Party after the untimely deaths of Chhotu Ram and Sikander Hayat Khan, to consolidate its position and organization in Punjab. British demands added to this as the Unionists were forced to carry out policies of grain requisition and the rationing of food supplies. 'The cardinal principle of maintaining rural stability was thus abandoned because of the pressing needs of the war effort.' 117 It was, however, only slowly and with great caution that the League emerged from under the Unionist

116. Linlithgow to Glancy, 1 February 1943, Ibid.
117. Talbot, op.cit. p. 143.
Party's control and began openly to challenge its predominant position within Punjab politics and with this Muslim League carved out a place in the all India politics. The Muslim League emerged as the "third force" or "third party" in the Indian political firmament after the British and Congress.

After 1943, there was hardly any organized group of Muslims opposed to the Muslim League. The Congress Muslims had lost much of their political importance. The Ahrar party in the Punjab had virtually disintegrated; the Krishak Proja Party in Bengal had lost much of its following. With the single exception of the Khuda-i-Khidmatgars in the North West Frontier Province there was virtually no opposition to the Muslim League from Muslim groups. The All India Muslim League with its consolidated position became the solespokesman of Muslims of India hereafter.

Separation had won the day. The seeds of 'Pakistan, watered in the flood of frustration, fear and fury soon raised their heads above the soil.